

Application Serial No. 10/814,926
Amendment dated July 24, 2009
Reply to Office Action dated March 25, 2009

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-34 (Cancelled)

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): An implant for the treatment of bone fractures, the implant comprising a main plate adapted to be fixed to a bone and a plate-shaped outrigger element adapted to be fixed to the bone, the main plate having a first side and a second side, wherein, in an assembled state of the implant, the plate-shaped outrigger element is arranged offset from the main plate and the second side of the main plate is positioned further from the outrigger element than the first side of the main plate, the implant further comprising a U-shape flexible connection element having a pair of U limbs extending outwardly from a U base, each of the pair of U limbs having a terminal end,

wherein the flexible connection element connects the main plate and the outrigger element to treat a bone fracture, the flexible connection element extending less than entirely around the periphery of the bone in the assembled state of the implant; and

wherein the main plate has at least one pair of first passages and the outrigger element has at least one pair of second passages through which the U limbs of the connection element are guidable, wherein, in the assembled state of the implant, the U base of the connection element is positioned outside of an aperture of the outrigger element, and adjacent to the outrigger element and the U limbs of the connection element extend outwardly from the outrigger element the said terminal end of one of the pair of U limbs passing through one of the pair of first passages in the main plate from the first side of the main plate to the second side of the main plate and said terminal end of the other one of the pair of U limbs passing through the other one of the pair of first passages in the main plate from the first side of the main plate to the second side of the main plate, wherein, in the assembled

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state of the implant, the terminal ends of both of the pair of U limbs are positioned adjacent to the second side of the main plate.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the connection element has an elongate U-shape.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the connection element is one of a wire and a thread.

Claim 38 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the connection element is coupled to at least one of the main plate and the outrigger by at least one of tying, hooking, and latching.

Claim 39 (Cancelled)

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger has a plurality of passages for the reception of fastening elements.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The implant of claim 40, wherein the passages are adapted to receive bone screws.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger is provided with at least five passages to receive fastening elements.

Claim 43 (Cancelled)

Claim 44 (Previously Presented): The implant of claim 35, wherein the U limbs of the U-shape connection element are received through the at least one pair of second passages in the outrigger element and are led through the at least one pair of first passages in the main plate, the U limbs of

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the U-shape connection element being connected to each other at free ends remote from the outrigger element.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The implant of claim 44, wherein the free ends are at least one of knotted and twisted together.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger is flexible.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger is formed as a perforated plate.

Claim 48 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger is made in at least one of a mesh-like and a grid-like shape.

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger includes a plurality of ring sections connected to one another directly or by webs and each bounding a passage.

Claim 50 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger and the connection element are unreleasably connected to one another.

Claim 51 (Cancelled)

Claim 52 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the spatial offset between the main plate and the outrigger corresponds to a length of the U limbs of the U-shape connection element.

Claim 53 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the connection element can be fixed at different positions relative to at least one of the main plate and the outrigger.

Claim 54 (Currently Amended): An implant for the treatment of bone fractures, the implant comprising a main plate adapted to be fixed to a bone and a plate-shaped outrigger element adapted to be fixed to the bone, the main plate having a first side and a second side, wherein, in an assembled state of the implant, the plate-shaped outrigger element is arranged offset from the main plate and the second side of the main plate is positioned further from the outrigger element than the first side of the main plate, the implant further comprising a U-shape flexible connection element having a pair of U limbs extending outwardly from a U base, each of the pair of U limbs having a terminal end.

wherein the flexible connection element connects the main plate and the outrigger element to treat a bone fracture, the flexible connection element extending less than entirely around the periphery of the bone in the assembled state of the implant;

wherein the main plate has at least one pair of first passages and the outrigger element has at least one pair of second passages through which the U limbs of the connection element are guidable, wherein, in the assembled state of the implant, the U base of the connection element is positioned outside of an aperture of the outrigger element, and adjacent to the outrigger element and the U limbs of the connection element extend outwardly from the outrigger element the terminal end of one of the pair of U limbs passing through one of the pair of first passages in the main plate from the first side of the main plate to the second side of the main plate and the terminal end of the other one of the pair of U limbs passing through the other one of the pair of first passages in the main plate from the first side of the main plate to the second side of the main plate, wherein, in the assembled state of the implant, the terminal ends of both of the pair of U limbs are positioned adjacent to the second side of the main plate; and

wherein the outrigger has a base area substantially smaller than that of the main plate.

Claim 55 (Cancelled)

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Claim 56 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein at least one of the main plate and the outrigger have at least one of a hook-like and claw-like continuation.

Claim 57 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger is made in plate shape and has smaller thickness than the main plate.

Claim 58 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 57, wherein the thickness of the outrigger is less than half the thickness of the main plate.

Claim 59 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger is deformable without tools during an operation.

Claim 60 (Previously Presented): An implant for the treatment of bone fractures, the implant comprising a main plate adapted to be fixed to a bone and a plate-shaped outrigger element adapted to be fixed to the bone, the main plate having a first side and a second side, wherein, in an assembled state of the implant, the plate-shaped outrigger element is arranged offset from the main plate and the second side of the main plate is positioned further from the outrigger element than the first side of the main plate, the implant further comprising a U-shape flexible connection element having a pair of U limbs extending outwardly from a U base, each of the pair of U limbs having a terminal end,

wherein the flexible connection element connects the main plate and the outrigger element to treat a bone fracture, the flexible connection element extending less than entirely around the periphery of the bone in the assembled state of the implant;

wherein the main plate has at least one pair of first passages and the outrigger element has at least one pair of second passages through which the U limbs of the connection element are guidable, wherein, in the assembled state of the implant, the U base of the connection element is positioned outside of an aperture of the outrigger element, and adjacent to the outrigger element and the U limbs of the connection element extend outwardly from the outrigger element the terminal end of one of the pair of U limbs passing through one of the pair of first passages in the main plate from the

first side of the main plate to the second side of the main plate and the terminal end of the other one of the pair of U limbs passing through the other one of the pair of first passages in the main plate from the first side of the main plate to the second side of the main plate, wherein, in the assembled state of the implant, the terminal ends of both of the pair of U limbs are positioned adjacent to the second side of the main plate; and

wherein the outrigger has a base area substantially smaller than that of the main plate.

Claim 61 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger includes a bioabsorbable material.

Claim 62 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 61, wherein the bioabsorbable material is plastically deformable at temperatures between 50 and 90°C.

Claim 63-66 (Cancelled)

Claim 67 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 61, wherein the bioabsorbable material comprises a polymer.

Claim 68 (Currently Amended): The implant in accordance with claim 35, wherein the outrigger and the flexible connection element are integral monolithic.

Claim 69 (Currently Amended): An implant for the treatment of bone fractures, the implant comprising a main plate adapted to be fixed to a bone and having at least one pair of passages formed therein, and a plate-shaped monolithic integral outrigger element adapted to be fixed to the bone, wherein, in an assembled state of the implant, the plate-shaped monolithic integral outrigger element is arranged offset from the main plate, the monolithic integral outrigger element including a flexible connection element having a pair of arms,

wherein, after the main plate and the integral outrigger element have been fixedly secured to a static bone, the pair of arms of the flexible connection element may be advanced into the at least

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one pair of passages of the main plate to connect the main plate and the outrigger element to treat a bone fracture.

Claim 70 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 69, wherein the outrigger element is made in plate shape and has smaller thickness than the main plate.

Claim 71 (Previously Presented): The implant in accordance with claim 69, wherein the flexible connection element extends less than entirely around the periphery of the bone in the assembled state of the implant.